

What is claimed is:

1. An automated method for trading stocks, the method comprising:
 - receiving a first trade order from a first non-institutional user outside of exchange trading hours;
 - receiving a second trade order from a second non-institutional user outside of exchange trading hours;
 - comparing the first trade order with the second trade order; and
 - executing a trade in real-time between the first and second users when a match is determined between the first trade order and the second trade order.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein comparing includes
 - determining that the first trade order is a buy order for a number of shares of a specific stock at a specific price, and wherein the second trade order is a sell order for a number of shares of the same stock at the same price.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein receiving a first trade order from a first user includes:
 - receiving the first trade order from the first user via a broker-dealer.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein matching the first trade order further includes:
 - storing the first trade order in a database as an open order to be matched later if a match is not immediately determined.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein receiving a first trade order includes:
receiving the first trade order via the Internet, and
wherein receiving a second trade order includes receiving the second trade order via the
Internet.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein executing a trade further includes:
updating a database if a trade between the first and second users is executed.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein executing a trade further includes:
notifying the first and second users of the executed trade.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein notifying the first and second users includes:
notifying the first and second users of the executed trade via the Internet.

9. An automated method for publishing real-time stock trading information from a computerized stock trading system, the stock trading information including open trade order information regarding open trade orders that have not been matched in the trading system, the method comprising:

5 accessing a trading system database to retrieve the open trade order information of trades placed by non-institutional users to be executed in real-time outside of exchange trading hours; retrieving the open trade order information from the trading system database; and sending the open order information over the Internet to a user.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein sending the open order information includes:
sending the open order information over the Internet to multiple users.

11. The method of claim 9, wherein sending the open order information includes:
sending the open order information to an Internet web site.

12. The method of claim 9, wherein sending the open order information further includes:
receiving the open order information by the user.

13. The method of claim 9, wherein retrieving the open trade order information includes retrieving executed trade order information, and wherein sending the open trade order information includes sending the executed trade order information.

14. The method of claim 9, wherein retrieving the open trade order information includes retrieving additional stock trading information, and wherein sending the open trade order information includes sending the additional stock trading information.

15. An automated method for trading stocks comprising:

receiving a first trade order from a first broker-dealer outside of exchange trading hours, the broker-dealer having received the first trade order from a first non-institutional user connected to the broker-dealer;

receiving a second trade order from a second broker-dealer outside of exchange trading hours, the broker-dealer having received the second trade order from a second non-institutional user connected to the broker-dealer;

comparing the first trade order with the second trade order; and

executing a trade in real-time between the first and second users when a match is determined between the first trade order and the second trade order.

16. The method of claim 15, further including the step of sending the trade order to the first broker-dealer via the Internet.

17. An automated method for trading stocks comprising:

5 sending a first trade order from a first non-institutional user to a broker-dealer outside of exchange trading hours;

receiving the first trade order by the broker-dealer;

verifying, by the broker-dealer, an acceptable account status of the first user for the first trade order;

10 sending the first trade order from the broker-dealer to a matching engine over a network if the first user's trade order is accepted by the broker-dealer;

receiving the first trade order from the broker-dealer by the matching engine;

comparing, by the matching engine, the first trade order with a second trade order placed by a second non-institutional user outside of exchange trading hours; and

executing a trade between the first and second users in real-time if a match between the first and second trade orders is determined.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein the network is a private network, and wherein sending the first trade order from the broker-dealer to the matching engine further includes:

sending the trade order from the broker-dealer to the matching engine over a private network.

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19. A method in a broker-dealer data-processing system for processing a user's trade order for trading stocks, the method comprising:

receiving a trade order outside of exchange trading hours from a non-institutional user having an account on the broker-dealer data-processing system;

5 verifying that the user's account satisfies the trade order; and

sending the trade order to a trading system to be matched and executed outside of exchange trading hours in real-time with a second non-institutional users' trade order stored by the trading system.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein sending the trade order further includes:

notifying the user of the sending of the trade order to the trading system.

21. The method of claim 19, wherein sending the trade order further includes:

receiving notification of whether the trade order was matched from the trading system; and

notifying the user of whether the trade order was matched.

22. A computer-readable medium containing instructions for controlling a data processing system to perform a method for trading stocks, the method comprising:

receiving a first trade order from a first non-institutional user outside of exchange trading hours;

5 receiving a second trade order from a second non-institutional user outside of exchange trading hours;

comparing the first trade order with the second trade order; and

executing a trade in real-time between the first and second users when a match is determined between the first trade order and the second trade order.

23. The computer-readable medium of claim 22, wherein comparing includes

determining that the first trade order is a buy order for a number of shares of a specific stock at a specific price, and the sell order is for a number of shares of the same stock at the same price.

24. The computer-readable medium of claim 22, wherein receiving a first trade order from a first user includes:

receiving the first trade order from the first user via a broker-dealer.

25. The computer-readable medium of claim 22, wherein matching the first trade order further includes:

storing the first trade order in a database as an open order to be matched later if a match is not immediately determined.

26. The computer-readable medium of claim 22, wherein receiving a first trade order includes:

receiving the first trade order via the Internet, and

wherein receiving a second trade order includes receiving the second trade order via the Internet.

27. The computer-readable medium of claim 22, wherein executing a trade further includes:

updating a database if a trade between the first and second users is executed.

28. The computer-readable medium of claim 22, wherein executing a trade further includes:

notifying the first and second users of the executed trade.

29. The computer-readable medium of claim 28, wherein notifying the first and second users includes:

notifying the first and second users of the executed trade via the Internet.

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30. A computer-readable medium containing instructions for controlling a data processing system to perform a method for publishing real-time stock trading information from a computerized stock trading system, the stock trading information including open trade order information regarding open trade orders that have not been matched in the trading system, the method comprising:

accessing a trading system database to retrieve the open trade order information of trades placed by non-institutional users to be executed in real-time outside of exchange trading hours; retrieving the open trade order information from the trading system database; and sending the open order information over the Internet to a user.

31. The computer-readable medium of claim 30, wherein sending the open order information includes:

sending the open order information over the Internet to multiple users.

32. The computer-readable medium of claim 30, wherein sending the open order information includes:

sending the open order information to an Internet web site.

33. The computer-readable medium of claim 30, wherein sending the open order information further includes:

receiving the open order information by the user.

34. The computer-readable medium of claim 30, wherein retrieving the open trade order information includes retrieving executed trade order information, and wherein sending the open trade order information includes sending the executed trade order information.

35. The computer-readable medium of claim 30, wherein retrieving the open trade order information includes retrieving additional stock trading information, and wherein sending the open trade order information includes sending the additional stock trading information.

36. A computer-readable medium containing instructions for controlling a data processing system to perform a method for trading stocks, the method comprising:

receiving a first trade order from a first broker-dealer outside of exchange trading hours, the broker-dealer having received the first trade order from a first non-institutional user connected to the broker-dealer;

receiving a second trade order from a second broker-dealer outside of exchange trading hours, the broker-dealer having received the second trade order from a second non-institutional user connected to the broker-dealer;

comparing the first trade order with the second trade order; and

executing a trade in real-time between the first and second users when a match is determined between the first trade order and the second trade order.

37. The computer-readable medium of claim 36, further including the step of sending the trade order to the first broker-dealer via the Internet.

38. A computer-readable medium containing instructions for controlling a broker-dealer data processing system to perform a method for processing a user's trade order for trading stocks, the method comprising:

receiving a trade order outside of exchange trading hours from a non-institution user having an account on the broker-dealer data-processing system;

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verifying that the user's account satisfies the trade order; and
sending the trade order to a trading system to be matched and executed outside of exchange trading hours in real-time with a second non-institutional users' trade order stored by the trading system.

39. The computer-readable medium of claim 38, wherein sending the trade order further includes:

notifying the user of the sending of the trade order to the trading system.

40. The computer-readable medium of claim 38, wherein sending the trade order further includes:

receiving notification of whether the trade order was matched from the trading system; and
notifying the user of whether the trade order was matched.

41. A data processing system for trading stocks comprising:

a receiving component configured to receive trade orders from non-institutional users outside of exchange trading hours;

a matching engine configured to match trade orders received from non-institutional users and execute trades outside of exchange trading hours in real-time between matching trade orders; and

a database configured to store trade orders.

42. The system of claim 41, further including:

a transmitting component configured to transmit real-time trading information outside of exchange trading hours to non-institutional users from the database.

43. The system of claim 42, wherein the transmitting component is a web server, and wherein the trading information is transmitted over the Internet.

44. The system of claim 41, wherein the database includes a section to store execution information.

45. The system of claim 41, wherein the receiving component is configured to receive the trade orders from broker-dealers outside of exchange trading hours.

46. A data processing system for publishing real-time stock trading information from a computerized stock trading system, the stock trading information including open trade order information regarding open trade orders that have not been matched in the trading system, the data processing system comprising:

5 a database configured to store open trade orders placed by non-institutional users outside of
exchange trading hours that have not been matched and executed;

an accessing component configured to access the open trade order information in the database; and

a transmitting component configured to transmit the open trade order information outside of exchange trading hours in real-time to non-institutional users over the Internet.

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47. A system for processing a user's trade order for trading stocks, the system comprising:

a receiving component configured to receive a trade order outside of exchange trading hours from a non-institutional user;

a database configured to store an account registered to the user;

5.5 a verifying component configured to verify that the user's account satisfies the trade order;
and

a sending component configured to send the trade order to a trading system to be matched with a second non-institutional users' trade order and executed in real-time.

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48. A data processing system for trading stocks comprising:

- a receiving component configured to receive trade orders from multiple broker-dealers outside of exchange trading hours, the broker-dealers receiving the trade orders from non-institutional users connected to the broker-dealers;
- a matching engine configured to match the received trade orders and execute trades between matching trade orders in real-time; and
- a database configured to store trade orders that have not been matched.

49. A data processing system for trading stocks comprising:

- means for receiving a first trade order from a first non-institutional user outside of exchange trading hours;
- means for receiving a second trade order from a second non-institutional user outside of exchange trading hours;
- means for comparing the first trade order with the second trade order; and
- means for executing a trade in real-time between the first and second users when a match is determined between the first trade order and the second trade order.